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**U.S. NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE (NMD)  
AND EUROPEAN SECURITY**

BY

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**U.S. NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE (NMD) AND EUROPEAN SECURITY**

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## ABSTRACT

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The debate over whether or not the U.S. should deploy an NMD system designed to protect all fifty states against limited attack by ballistic missiles is presently raging in both the United States and Europe. An NMD deployment as currently envisioned by the U.S. government is a real concern for European Nations for a number of reasons. These include concern that they have not been appropriately consulted with, or involved in, U.S. NMD decisions, concern that U.S. NMD deployment could upset worldwide strategic stability by encouraging an arms race that might negate European nuclear deterrent forces, and concern that NMD might undermine the traditional NATO concept of shared defense responsibility and hence lead to a weakening of important U.S.-European defense ties. Yet, the U.S. government's NMD concept, by better protecting the USA, may actually strengthen its foreign policy and provide more freedom of action thus arguably benefiting both the U.S. and her allies. So, the question becomes should the European Nations fear this concept or, on the contrary, should it make them more comfortable? This paper will examine this very complicated issue in detail.



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## **U.S. NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE (NMD) AND EUROPEAN SECURITY**

It is the policy of the United States to deploy as soon as is technologically possible an effective National Missile Defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack (whether accidental, unauthorized, or deliberate) with funding subject to the annual authorization of appropriations and the annual appropriation of funds for National Missile Defense.

**U.S. Public Law H.R. 4,  
July 23, 1999**

In September 2000, Bill Clinton, the president of the United States, decided to defer a decision on a deployment of an NMD system to his successor.<sup>1</sup> Uncertainty on the technological feasibility of the system motivated this decision, but another major reason for this postponement seems to have been the lack of political and diplomatic agreement inside and outside the USA. The Clinton administration had stated that its decision would be based on the following issues: The nature of the threat, the cost, the technical feasibility of a system and the overall impact on national security.<sup>2</sup> This last question obviously includes the views of U.S. allies. There is indeed a real concern among United States allies in Western Europe who find it difficult to understand why the Americans might undertake such a program and who fear that this action might threaten European security. Much of this is due to European concerns over the impact a U.S. deployment might have on Russia and China, two countries of great importance to both European and U.S. security.

Thus, the very tough internal debate on whether or not an NMD system should be deployed is complicated by an external misunderstanding with the allies and USA's former adversaries, Russia and China. Europeans do not question the legitimate right of the United States to make this decision. Certainly, the United States, as every other sovereign nation, has the right to decide what is best for its national security. However, the NMD decision is closely linked to the security interests of its allies and vice versa. In fact, today's U.S. global responsibilities create an environment where many of the decisions affect the security of countries all over the world and hence, cannot be limited to only U.S. internal security.

Upon examination, it appears that the current debate may not have focused on the right question. While the internal American debate has stressed the technical feasibility argument, the costs and reactions of Russia, Europe has focused on risks of arms proliferation and to

arms control treaties in general. Perhaps the right question to ask is whether or not the envisaged deployment could enhance American, allied and global security. The answer to this question should indicate the way to go. However, the USA should not have to find this answer alone and, because this issue is a global one, the debate should be global and include American's allies -European and Asian- and former enemies. It appears that the lack of debate has created a huge misunderstanding, internally and externally to the USA, on the real goal of such a system. Presently, each of those parties with differing views seeks to maintain its positions in order not to cede advantage to the other. Of more concern is the real risk of dividing the allies, each seeking to assure its security by going its own way including perhaps establishing separate agreements with Russia or China.

Before stating what the USA, its allies and its former enemies should do about this issue in order to maintain their security, it is essential to understand the current National Missile Defense concept, the different internal and external views, and how they can be accommodated. Thus, this paper, after defining the most current NMD deployment concepts, and taking stock of technical progress on the system, will focus on the current internal and external debates. Finally, it will provide an overall assessment and recommendations by the author.

## **DEFINITION AND TECHNICAL OPTIONS**

Before defining the NMD system one needs to understand what it is envisioned to do. Indeed there is a huge difference between the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) projected by President Reagan, which so many tend to associate with the current program and either the Clinton NMD or the one envisaged by President George Bush Senior. This difference over ends sought by the proponents results in the difference in the concepts, which is important to understand because European security may depend on the solution. SDI was intended to protect the United States and its allies against attacks from the USSR at the time of the cold war. SDI was a technological challenge, which, due to the fact that the USSR could not compete, led it to collapse.<sup>3</sup> Although it was relinquished after this collapse, this program gave the USA a huge technological advantage, as well as the concepts and the credibility to undertake the current NMD program. However, this current program is very different from SDI because it is "National" in nature. The Cold War has ended and the threat has changed. It is no

longer a matter of global defense against a peer, but is today about countering the so-called "rogue states" or "states of concern" and terrorist groups, and preventing them from challenging the USA.

The United States assesses that its traditional deterrent forces might not be sufficient to counter that kind of threat and the Clinton Administration decided to develop a limited NMD to protect its population against a limited WMD attack. The possible attack was seen as limited because: First, it is assessed that in any case the number of missiles retained by the USA's possible foes would number at most in tens rather than in hundreds.<sup>4</sup> Second, their technological advancement would not allow multiple reentry vehicles. And finally, their countermeasures system would be non-existent or simple in nature and therefore easily countered.

In the framework of this limited NMD concept two major technical options have generated the most discussion. The first option would land base a hundred anti ballistic missiles in Alaska, which are expected to intercept threat missiles during their terminal phase of flight.<sup>5</sup> This option is purely designed to provide a defense of the 50 United States even though some devices like early warning radars must be located in Northern Europe -Denmark and the United Kingdom.<sup>6</sup> This system was the one chosen by the Clinton administration and has been undergoing testing and development during the last several years. Two of the three initial intercept tests were unsuccessful in completing intercepts of the simulated threat for several technical reasons and therefore, many are not convinced that the proposed system could work as necessary.<sup>7</sup> These failures were the pretext for the administration to decide not to begin deployment before additional tests and to leave any deployment decision to the next administration. Indeed, although the tests conducted by the managers of the project revealed that it is not easy to hit a bullet with another bullet, it seems that present and future technology will allow the U.S. to be able to reach this challenge soon. Nevertheless, this issue is not the only technical one and many see the problem of how countering countermeasures as even more difficult. Thus, despite the Clinton administration's expectations, many believe it is easy and even within reach of the "states of concern", to implement reliable, countermeasures on ballistic missiles.<sup>8</sup>

The "boost-phase" option is the second missile defense option most often discussed and considered by politicians and technicians. A boost phase intercept system would intercept the attacking missile in the first phase of its flight. Certain specialists say that this option is easier to

implement because in boost phase flight the infrared signature of the missile would be stronger and countermeasures problem would be solved because, at that time in the flight, countermeasures would not have yet been deployed.<sup>9</sup> The major technical difficulty rests in acquiring the target and, then, in firing on it in time to allow intercept while the missile is still in the boost phase. A boost phase intercept NMD system would require a huge network of satellites to detect immediately any potential threat launch and then to launch an attacking missile without risk of error. In addition, this option would force the U.S. either to put anti ballistic interceptors and radars near the territory of these threatening states or to have at its disposal laser satellite weapons. The latter looks like the Ronald Reagan SDI, which was relinquished after the end of the cold war. The former could be implemented by putting land-based missiles and perhaps radars in allied territories –like Turkey or South Korea for example- or by deploying a sea-based system off the coast of threatening countries. Given that this concept allows for intercept of an attacking missile as soon as it leaves its base, some claim that this option, if it is technologically feasible, offers a better protection to US's allies.<sup>10</sup>

The deployment of either of these two options, even though their cost would be far less than the SDI system previously wanted by the Reagan administration, would entail a significant cost within the DOD budget. Expenses are already higher than \$10 billion dollars, and the U.S. is still arguably only on the first steps of feasibility studies. The Clinton administration assessed that the total would not be more than 20 billion dollars,<sup>11</sup> but other U.S. Government specialists believe that 30 billion dollars would be a minimum cost to implement the Clinton proposed NMD system.<sup>12</sup> In any event, the cost of this implementation will be a major factor in the decision making process.

## **THE DEBATE**

The debate over U.S. National Missile Defense has focused for one part on the technical and budget aspects, but for another part, and one more essential in European eyes, on diplomatic and political issues.

### **The internal debate**

First of all there is in the USA a huge and continuous internal debate, which focuses not only on what is the best NMD system to implement, but also on whether deployment is a

necessity. There is little if any unanimity in the country on this question and this lack of unanimity shows the complexity of the issue.

### **The opponents of the concept**

Those who are against the concept of a U.S. National Missile Defense estimate that it is useless, too expensive and dangerous.

First, they consider that NMD is useless because there is no threat, which could justify it.<sup>13</sup> They hold that the main defense policy of the country is deterrence and until now this concept has worked. Due to this concept, peace has been maintained in the northern part of the world for almost fifty years. The concept of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) threatened the two Cold War opponents enough to prevent them from fighting on their own territory or on that of one of their neighbors. After the end of the cold war a huge reduction in nuclear armaments was undertaken by each nuclear power helped by a number of arms-control agreements.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, at the same time, other countries like China, India and Pakistan, and perhaps also "less predictable" countries like North Korea, Iran or Iraq, developed their own nuclear capabilities. Opponents of NMD argue that there is no reason that deterrence will not work against these countries as it worked during the cold war. An example of this functioning of deterrence was the behavior of Iraq during the Gulf War. Threatened by the U.S. that nuclear weapons would be used if Iraq launched chemical WMD on allied troops, Saddam Hussein gave up the idea of using its chemical means.<sup>15</sup> Thus opponents of NMD concept assess that if deterrence worked during the Gulf War it should work now.

Secondly, the opponents of NMD estimate that the costs of the system are too high in comparison to the threat represented by ballistic missiles. In fact they believe that, even if deterrence would not work, the ballistic missile threat is only a small part of the overall threat posed by WMD. According to them, it would be easier for a "rogue state" or terrorist groups to get chemical or biological weapons into the U.S. by means other than by ballistic rockets.<sup>16</sup> When one sees the difficulties encountered by developed states in countering drug traffic, it is easy to understand how easy it might be to smuggle a WMD into a developed country. Thus, some opponents of NMD believe that, building an NMD system, the U.S. wastes its money and consequently weakens some of its other capabilities such as nuclear and conventional deterrence, border protection and its ability to intervene overseas including in Europe by reducing projection capabilities and pre-positioned assets. In addition, they believe that there would be no end to the costs of such a system. These opponents see current estimated costs of

\$30 billion, as grossly underestimated. They argue costs would be closer to \$100 billion for what they believe may well be an unreliable system.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, radical U.S. opponents of the concept consider this project as dangerous for several additional reasons. First, they believe it could restart the arms race with Russia and China. Indeed, they say that, by reinforcing U.S. defenses, it could incite Russia and China to enhance their offensive nuclear arsenal in order to be able to overcome U.S. defenses. Consequently, European nations and other countries would have to strengthen their attacking capabilities or to begin an NMD program of their own. In any event, this escalation would likely be followed, without constraints, by other countries all over the world. In addition, opponents point out that either NMD concepts would violate the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty signed between the U.S. and the USSR in 1972. They stress that, if this treaty is abrogated, Russia would be free to develop a more accurate and extended NMD system than it already has around Moscow. Such a system might push U.S. and European authorities to, also, enhance their offensive capabilities and withdraw their support for the START I and START II treaties. Thus many of the strides in arms control agreements made over the past 20-30 years would either be postponed for a long time or lost entirely.<sup>18</sup>

### **The supporters of NMD**

The supporters of NMD believe that there is a real threat to the USA, which requires the development of an accurate NMD system. They argue also that such a system is negotiable with Russia and will not start a new arms race.

In July 1998 the Rumsfeld Commission, which included both proponents and opponents of NMD, concluded that there was a real threat. The report stated that nations viewed by the United States as adversaries were developing and would have within several years the capacity to attack the USA by nuclear missiles.<sup>19</sup> The first of these nations is North Korea, which in August 1998 launched an improved version of its Taepo Dong I missile.<sup>20</sup> This launch showed that North Korea was very close to obtaining the capacity to reach the USA with a weapon of mass destruction. It is estimated that such a capability may be available within five years.<sup>21</sup> The threat from other nations like Iran and Iraq are less urgent but it is assessed that they could possess such weapons within ten years.<sup>22</sup> In addition to all these potential enemy states, other unstable nations could represent a potential danger for the US, perhaps more by accident than through any real will to attack it.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, since the end of the cold war, Russia has shown economic and political weaknesses, which could lead to a lack of control and consequently to a

launch by accident. China, India and Pakistan, could also present potential threats. The previously described threats, resulted in calls in the U.S. Congress for an NMD system and, in 1999, the Clinton administration codified these desires into a law.<sup>24</sup>

However, some strong supporters of NMD as a concept oppose the architecture chosen by the Clinton Administration. These critics say that this architecture would not work. Indeed, the technical tests already done have shown that, despite their technical advantage over all other nations, the USA would still have great difficulty in developing a reliable system to destroy a ballistic missile in the reentry phase of its flight. In addition they assess that with this architecture it would be impossible for technicians to counter decoys, which they claim would be very simple to implement on every target even for states or organizations with little capabilities. For all of these reasons, many now ask for the deployment of a stronger NMD system able to eliminate these potential enemy possibilities. Their choice would be a boost-phase system.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, the Clinton administration assessed that the U.S. needs something rapidly and that the land-based NMD system, though it is not perfect, is sufficient to counter and weaken the estimated threat. Even if future potential adversaries develop countermeasures, the U.S. technology will find the way to counter them!<sup>26</sup>

Supporters of this limited NMD system point out that it is not intended to weaken the Russian or Chinese deterrent, and that the ABM Treaty can in fact be modified to allow for an NMD deployment. Some of them take this argument even further by arguing that the ABM Treaty is no longer valid and needs to be changed to support U.S. views and needs. They reject the argument that the ABM Treaty is a precondition to the arms reduction process. For example, they recall that the USSR and the USA made their major improvement in nuclear weapons after signing this treaty in 1972 and hence, due to increases in numbers of warhead through "MIRVed" systems, the world actually was made more dangerous.<sup>27</sup>

### **The external debate with Europe**

Although the debate internal to the United States is often very ardent about technical options and how to deal with Russia or China, there are very few discussions on how European and other allied nations would perceive a NMD system. For years transatlantic links have shaped western nations' defense policies, of which U.S. involvement in Europe has been the core. Thus, European nations are very concerned that America might implement a National Missile Defense, which could weaken traditional US-European ties and threaten worldwide strategic stability by challenging international treaties.

First of all, European nations do not share the same understanding of the threat as Americans. They believe that, if there is a real threat from "states of concern" or terrorist groups, this threat is not huge and can be reduced by diplomatic, conventional military, or at last resort, by nuclear deterrence. These means worked well during the Cold War and more recently during the Gulf War. This paper has already shown how deterrence worked against Saddam Hussein to deter the use of chemical weapons during the Gulf War, but diplomatic and conventional means have worked as well in other situations. In Iran, the Kathami government is not more threatening or "rogue" than Mao's China or Stalin's USSR was and, in the European view, certainly not to the point they would launch a WMD equipped missile against the United States.<sup>28</sup> In any case "it is one thing for a government to repress its population but quite another for it to risk literally everything –including its own survival- by launching a long-range missile armed with weapons of mass destruction at the United States."<sup>29</sup> Thus, according to the European point of view, the American National Missile Defense concept is like using a bulldozer to run over an ant.

In addition, European governments do not understand why the U.S. would take the risk of weakening US-Russia relations and global stability over such a negligible threat. Various treaties like the ABM Treaty and START I and II, which have reduced nuclear weapons over the past thirty years, have shaped a balance of power, which had seemed to suit every body. The change the USA wants to impose to this equilibrium appears to many European observers as a dangerous game.<sup>30</sup> Everyone in Europe, as do many in the USA, agrees that the ABM treaty is the cornerstone of global security,<sup>31</sup> and that it has contributed to reducing global tension in the northern continent. Consequently, to challenge it risks starting a new period of tension. European governments are very concerned by a new arms race, which could increase global insecurity.<sup>32</sup> This arms race, by improving former enemies nuclear ballistic capabilities would be likely to weaken European countries own deterrent force postures. For thirty years European nations have seen and followed the arms control process and have largely approved of it both politically and economically.<sup>33</sup> This challenge to arms control overall driven by the American will to protect itself could lead to great diplomatic upheavals and push European nations to seek their security elsewhere. Russia<sup>34</sup> and China<sup>35</sup> already, have contacted them and have proposed cooperation on opposition to U.S. NMD.

For Europeans another great concern is the behavior of Americans towards them concerning the US NMD deployment. Their confidence in American goodwill was greatly

challenged by the refusal of the U.S. Congress to agree to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). This lack of confidence increased when the USA decided to build an NMD system as soon as technologically feasible without consulting them. Indeed, it seems that, according to an April 2000 report of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, "the first time they were really aware of the seriousness of the U.S. NMD program was in February 2000."<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, Europeans are concerned that, in the internal U.S. debate, European views, and allied views in general, are largely neglected. Consequences of the U.S. policy and its various decisions are seldom stated in terms of their effects on European security. Very often, it is said that if Europeans want to be protected, they have to support the American decisions.<sup>37</sup> Thus, as many Europeans see it, everything happens on this issue as if the USA were doing what they wanted and were thinking only about their own security without taking into account their allies. This behavior leads to Europeans feeling "reduced to second or third class rank not only from the standpoint of their status vis-à-vis the United States, but also in terms of the quality of [their] missile defense forces which would appear to be second rate."<sup>38</sup>

## **ASSESSMENT AND PROPOSITIONS**

### **The threat and the ways to counter it**

The differing perceptions of the threat by the USA and Europe determine in great part the behavior of both parties towards the NMD concept. The events of the last years obviously show that the U.S. is a real target for terrorist groups and potentially for states, which support this terrorism. Attacks against the Khobar Towers in Dhahran in June 1996, against U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998, and more recently against the destroyer Cole prove that there are terrorist groups proud of, and willing to, challenge U.S. global supremacy. So far the means they have at their disposal limit the range and the lethality of their actions but their capabilities are likely to be improved in the following years.<sup>39</sup> If consequently the threat increases, no one can assert that the risk for the U.S. of being hit by a WMD launched on a ballistic missile is negligible. On the other hand, for geographic reasons, threats are also different for Europe and the USA. For example a missile from North Korea can reach the USA while it cannot reach Europe;<sup>40</sup> this influences both U.S. and European security policies against that country. Conversely, Europe is more vulnerable from the Middle East and, consequently, it

does not have the same perception of the threat and the same ways to counter it as the U.S. has.

Given the reality of these threats, it is logical for the USA to seek to protect itself. The USA has assessed that deterrence, diplomacy and conventional armaments are not enough to do so. In fact, deterrence has worked and still works vis-à-vis organized nations, but the risk is not zero that it might not work against powers in decline or against extremist countries or groups. Consequently, the decision made by the USA to protect its people against such attacks is justified and must be understood by its allies. However, if the USA wants this understanding, it has to make a better effort to obtain it. Until now, at least according to published accounts, it is obvious to the author that the behavior of the U.S. vis-à-vis Europe has not been conducive to creating trust and confidence in the American plan by its European allies. United States behavior to date, in this author's opinion, has not been consistent with a world leader who knows its strength and seeks to attain its goals. Rather, it has seemed almost scornful and not this from a country which says that it considers its partners as important to this process.

### **NMD: an improvement of global security**

However, the right question is whether or not U.S. NMD improves U.S. security. In a corollary manner, an other question should be asked: Is such a deployment likely to weaken or strengthen global security, and consequently European security?

The answer to the first question is yes, NMD does improve U.S. Security. Indeed, by reducing the risk that a limited attack by ballistic missile can reach its goal, the USA protects its population more than if it does not have an NMD system and so, improves its overall security. In addition, as it happened in the days of the Reagan SDI, there is an opportunity to influence potential enemies to give up once presented the challenge of facing a fielded U.S. NMD system<sup>41</sup>. However, the answer is not completely obvious, because in fielding an NMD system, the USA could destabilize the global equilibrium, and consequently, perhaps, increase the risk to its own deterrence. Nevertheless, even if this risk exists, it is minimized by the fact the U.S. nuclear capability and technology is projected for many years to remain far superior to those of other countries.<sup>42</sup> Its deterrence capability is, and will stay, very effective whether or not other nations could improve theirs.

Concerning whether such a deployment is likely to weaken or strengthen global security, and consequently European security, the answer is that it will do both. But, this answer, of course, needs more discussion. In case of an attack, or of a threat of an attack, against Europe

by a "rogue state", a failed nation or an uncontrolled group, two cases should be considered. First, if the USA is protected by an NMD system, it might either intervene to help its allies or not. If it does not commit itself due to the risk of an attack on its own soil, its credibility among its allies, and indeed also all over the world would definitely be destroyed. On the other side, if the United States goes to the aid of its allies, the risk is great that it will be hit, if the enemy still has the means to attack it... In that case, the USA is the loser: Either it loses its credibility, or its life!

Second, if the USA is protected by an NMD system, it can intervene to aid its allies with substantially less risk of being hit by a WMD armed ballistic missile.<sup>43</sup> In that case, the gain is triple for the USA: First, it reduces the power of the adversary nation by hitting it. Second, having hit the enemy, and being protected by its own NMD, the chances that U.S. soil could be reached by a missile are reduced. Finally, all over the world U.S. credibility would be safe and, therefore, the USA could maintain and strengthen its leading position. Thus, if the USA possesses an NMD system it is obvious that it would be more likely to commit itself to the aid of its allies. Consequently, security of the European nations would be heightened.

Nevertheless, if the security of the European nations vis-à-vis this uncontrolled enemy would be certainly strengthened by a U.S. NMD, what about their own deterrence as opposed to Russia, China or other well established nuclear nations? In fact, if these nations, as a result of a U.S. NMD deployment, increase their nuclear power the risk exists that European nuclear deterrence will become weaker. However, here again the danger seems minimum. First, the USA has the means and freedom of action to deter any aggression against its allies. Second, it is unlikely that these former enemy nations have either the real desire or economic strength necessary to increase dramatically their nuclear potential based only upon the fact that the USA has a limited NMD system. At the very most, in the author's view, they would maintain their current capabilities, follow their current nuclear programs and freeze talks on nuclear disarmament. However that may be, the enhancement of capabilities by non US nations, and the way that people see the risk of it, could be impacted by a strong and proactive U.S. diplomatic and political action. This could include reviving talks on these matters in order to draw closer on the differing points of view.

## **The way ahead**

The National Security of the USA and its National Interests are not limited to its own frontiers. Europe and other allies are greatly involved in these same security interests. In the current world environment nothing can be decided without taking into account global security. Consequently, the U.S. must not decide unilaterally what to do.<sup>44</sup> Even though it has the right to decide by itself what is the best for its own security, deciding alone would be counterproductive. Thus, at the same time that it tries to find the most accurate system, it should also engage in dialogue to make its partners -allies and former enemies- understand what it is that it wants to do and why.

President Clinton was right when he postponed the decision on the deployment of U.S. NMD because the project was not ready technically, politically and diplomatically. Indeed, if it wants to be credible, the USA must have a reliable system. The efficiency of a country's nuclear deterrence is demonstrated by of its mastering of nuclear weapons and enemy improvements. In the same way, U.S. NMD credibility will depend of the results the USA obtains before deciding to deploy a NMD system and by the capability of that system to outclass any enemy capabilities, including countermeasures. Consequently, if the United States decides to possess a limited NMD system, it must develop the best and the most credible one possible, and not content itself with a system known to be ineffective. This requirement is also necessary to conduct successful negotiations with its allies and former enemies, since it would be ridiculous of its partners to risk global equilibrium for nothing.

Simultaneously, the USA should engage strong negotiations with its partners and other friendly nations in order to convince them of the relevance of deploying a limited NMD system. First, the U.S. must seriously discuss the NMD issue with Russia and China. Currently it does so, but the dialogue is often more conflicting than cooperative. The Cold War ended more than ten years ago; it is now time that these countries, as it is the case with Russia regarding collaboration on space issues, to be considered as partners rather than adversaries. If "rogue states" or terrorism threaten Americans and Western European citizens, it is also then possible that they might attack the Russians and other stabilized nations. Consequently, the USA, Russia and other nuclear nations have to discuss together all these issues and find common solutions. In these discussions, all partners must look at the issue from every angle. Since the global balance of nuclear power is still the rule, and if U.S. NMD is seen to threaten this balance, then the U.S. must show their willingness to address these concerns. They can for

example include NMD in disarmament discussions by counting interceptors as weapons or by accepting larger numbers of Russian offensive forces that might be necessary to overwhelm U.S. defensive weapons. In doing so the USA could clearly show that their aim is only to counter the so-called “states of concern” but under no circumstances to hamper Russian or Chinese deterrence. Russian President Putin has made some propositions in that direction, including the building of a common NMD.<sup>45</sup> Even if these proposals seem to be a ploy to attract Europeans and split links between Americans and their allies, the U.S. could jump at the opportunity and try to involve Russia more in a cooperative defense process.

Second, the USA must convince its allies to accept this program. In order to succeed, it must consider European allies as full partners in the discussion and not treat them as second-rank nations that have to accept U.S. decisions without any real say. The United States has a lot of good arguments but it has to prove that its will does not “represent a unilateralist trend in U.S. foreign policy”<sup>46</sup> and that it has done everything possible to find global agreement. By hinting that, if it does not reach an agreement with Russia, it could withdraw from the ABM Treaty under the supreme national interest clause,<sup>47</sup> the USA does not reassure its allies. On the contrary, the United States should persuade its European allies that modifying a no longer sufficient ABM Treaty is a necessity and involve them more fully in the discussion process with Russia and China. In doing so, the USA is more likely to receive help from European nations than systematic opposition. When, in the early 80s, the USSR threatened Europe with SS20 nuclear missiles, there were huge discussions in Europe on whether or not European nations should accept deployment of U.S. Pershing II, and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles(GLCM). At that time, cooperation between European and American leaders was so successful that even a nation like France, with a socialist government and communist ministries, strongly supported the implementation!

## **CONCLUSION**

As with every other nation in the world, it is a primary right of the USA to defend its people by any means it decides is best. In 1999, it declared its intention to deploy a National Missile Defense as soon as this was technologically feasible. This decision was justified by the threats against the U.S. from “rogue” or failed states and terrorist groups. But, this NMD program should not be deployed whatever the price. The price could be very high for the U.S.

budget and consequently for American defense writ large. By threatening global stability a U.S. deployment could also heighten the price for the overall security in Europe and in the rest of the world. Indeed, if the USA fails in reaching an agreement on NMD with its partners –allies and former foes- uncontrolled arms proliferation could restart, weaken the global balance of power and lead to the greatest dangers.

In order to succeed in its enterprise the USA must be sure that the system it wants to implement is reliable and efficient. Then, it must engage in broad discussions with its partners in order to involve them entirely in the process. Finally, U.S. friends and allies must not have the slightest doubt concerning U.S. intentions about this question. The Cold war is over. Russia, China, Japan, Europe, and the USA are now partners, though some tensions remain. It is time to cooperate rather than to confront. Americans, Russians and Europeans have a great record in space cooperation, why shouldn't they not have a real defense cooperation program as relates to the ballistic missile threat? American discussion on these issues started with Russia and China, but has not really focused appropriately on Europe, America's first ally.

"There should be discussion, and even debate, among Americans and Europeans about missile defenses and their implications for transatlantic security and the transatlantic relationship. Let the debate begin."<sup>48</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks by the President on National Missile Defense* (The White House, 1 September 2000), 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Samuel R. Berger* (The White House, 1 September 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 18.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Slocombe, *The Administration's Approach* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 82.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>6</sup> Justin Bernier and Daniel Keohan, *Europe's Aversion To NMD* (Strategic Review, Winter 2001), 41.

<sup>7</sup> Union of Concerned Scientists, *National Missile Defense: Does It Make Sense?* (available from <<http://www.ucsusa.org/arms/missile.update.html>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2000), 2.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Garwin, *A Defense that Will Not Defend* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 110.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Slocombe, *The Administration's Approach* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 81.

<sup>12</sup> United States General Accounting Office, *National Missile Defense: Even With Increased Funding Technical and Schedule Risks Are High* (23 June 1998, available from <<http://www.fas.org/spp/stawars/gao/nsiad-98-153.htm>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2000), 1.

<sup>13</sup> Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers, *National Missile Defense and the ABM Treaty* (1 November 1999, available from <<http://www.clw.org/pub/clw/coalition/edadv110199.htm>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2000), 2.

<sup>14</sup> Aviation week and Space Technology, *Ballistic Missile Defense: On Target?* (The McGraw-Hill Companies, February and March 1997), 44.

<sup>15</sup> *Remarks by the President on National Missile Defense* (The White House, 1 September 2000), 3.

<sup>16</sup> Union of Concerned Scientists, *National Missile Defense: Does It Make Sense?* (available from <<http://www.ucsusa.org/arms/missile.update.html>>; Internet, accessed 10 October 2000), 4.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Garwin, *A Defense that Will Not Defend* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 118.

<sup>18</sup> Jonathan Dean, *Going Up the Hill and Down Again: A Crisis for Nuclear Disarmament* (Union of Concerned Scientists, available from <<http://www.ucsusa.org/arms/missile.hill.html>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2000), 1.

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Union of Concerned Scientists, *National Missile Defense: Does It Make Sense?* (available from <<http://www.ucsusa.org/arms/missile.update.html>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2000), 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Jack Matlock, *Security, The Bottom Line* (Arms Control Today, October 2000), 18.

<sup>24</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 6.

<sup>25</sup> Baker Spring, *Myths About Missile Defense And The Arms Race* (27 April 2000, available from <<http://www.heritage.org/library/backgrounder/bgl1385.html>>; Internet, accessed 10 October 2000), 5-7.

<sup>26</sup> Stephen Hadley, *A Call to Deploy* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 103.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>28</sup> François Heisbourg, *Brussels's Burden* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 132.

<sup>29</sup> Union of Concerned Scientists, *National Missile Defense: Does It Make Sense?* (available from <<http://www.ucsusa.org/arms/missile.update.html>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2000), 5.

<sup>30</sup> Hubert Vedrine, Letter to Mrs Allbright. (May 2000).

<sup>31</sup> Walter Slocombe, *The Administration's Approach* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 83.

<sup>32</sup> Hubert Vedrine, Letter to Mrs Allbright. (May 2000).

<sup>33</sup> United States General Accounting Office, *Missile Defense issue overshadows friendship in Clinton visit to Europe* (2 June 2000, available from <<http://www.cnn.com/spp/2000/WORLD/europe/06/02/clinton.europe>>; Internet, accessed 10 October 2000), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 12.

<sup>35</sup> François Heisbourg, *Brussels's Burden* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 130.

<sup>36</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 11.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Hadley, *A Call to Deploy* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 105.

<sup>38</sup> François Heisbourg, *Brussels's Burden* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 129.

<sup>39</sup> Stephen Hadley, *A Call to Deploy* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 99.

<sup>40</sup> François Heisbourg, *Brussels's Burden* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 132.

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Hadley, *A Call to Deploy* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 100.

<sup>42</sup> Lawrence Freedman, *Does Deterrence Have a Future?* (Arms Control Today, October 2000), 6.

<sup>43</sup> Stephen Hadley, *A Call to Deploy* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 104.

<sup>44</sup> Jack Mendelsohn, *A Pause in Unilateralism?* (Arms Control Today, October 2000), 21.

<sup>45</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 12.

<sup>46</sup> Jack Mendelsohn, *A Pause in Unilateralism?* (Arms Control Today, October 2000), 21.

<sup>47</sup> Walter Slocombe, *The Administration's Approach* (The Washington Quarterly, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Summer 2000), 85.

<sup>48</sup> Bruce Weinrod, *U.S. Missile Defenses and Europe* (Mediterranean Quarterly 11, Fall 2000), 22.



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